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President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia), Vice-President, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Statements on the occasion of the fifth Africa Industrialization Day

The President (*interpretation from French*): I should like to read out a statement that the President of the General Assembly, who is absent today owing to unavoidable commitments, has requested that I deliver on his behalf on the occasion of the fifth Africa Industrialization Day. It reads as follows:

"On 20 November countries throughout the continent of Africa and in various capitals of the world will commemorate Africa Industrialization Day. This year marks the fifth celebration of the Day since its proclamation at the Conference of African Ministers of Industry at Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1989 and its endorsement by the General Assembly.

"We are all well aware that Africa's industrial progress has fallen behind those of other developing regions. Whereas industry in Asia and Latin America has, on the whole, shown great strides, Africa has not kept pace and, in some instances, has even lost ground, and there is even a tendency to equate Africa with poverty, hunger, disease and civil strife.

"Nevertheless, Africa is in fact rich in both natural and human resources. Industrialization will make it possible for African countries to transform those resources into material goods with a higher economic value. It will enable them to realize the full potential of their abundant resources and propel them to economic prosperity. Indeed, industrialization holds the key to addressing the major concerns of the African continent.

"It is generally recognized that industry is the engine of economic growth and development. It provides the essential inputs for other sectors of the economy and produces the end products to satisfy consumer needs. It creates productive employment, promotes rural development, sustains agriculture and makes health care more widely available. In short, industry is the key to both economic progress and social development in Africa.

"The theme of this year's Africa Industrialization Day — private-sector development — is particularly appropriate in light of current economic changes. Industry is clearly moving from the public to the private domain, not only in the countries in transition but throughout most parts of the developing world, including Africa.

"The economic lessons of more than two decades of development have shown us that for industry to thrive and grow the competitiveness,

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innovation and entrepreneurial spirit of the private sector must be given the opportunity to flourish. We in Africa should take heed of this lesson and lend support to our industrialists and entrepreneurs. Above all, Governments throughout the continent can help by creating an environment conducive to sustainable industrial development. This is the message I wish to impart on the occasion of Africa Industrialization Day.

"While Africa must bear the primary responsibility for its own industrialization, the international community must do its part in supporting and sustaining that process. Indeed, it is in the interest of the international community to do so. An industrializing Africa will benefit its trading partners as new markets for their exports open up and as the increasing prosperity of Africans enables them to purchase goods from abroad. Through debt reduction, improved market access, technology transfer, increased investments and official development assistance, Africa can do even more to attain self-sustaining industrialization and economic growth. This will bring not only a better life to more than 700 million Africans but will enable Africa to make a positive contribution to international economic cooperation.

"The central task of the United Nations system is to galvanize international action in support of Africa's efforts to attain economic prosperity and social stability. Among the organizations of the United Nations system, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has played a leading role in fostering international economic cooperation for African industrialization. Together with the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity, UNIDO has brought heightened awareness of the pressing industrial needs of the continent and has provided its expertise in policy and technical matters in support of African industrialization.

"In the context of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the Uruguay Round agreements, Africa will need to undertake a major reorientation of its industrial strategies and programmes. Countries in the continent need to strengthen their agro-industrial sector and move towards increased processing of raw materials and exports of manufactured goods. That is why it is more necessary and urgent than ever to create an instrument for financing pre-feasibility studies for the diversification of African agricultural raw materials, in the framework of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. It is clear that diversification of African raw materials will contribute to broadening the industrial base that is indispensable for the sustained growth of the manufacturing sector in African countries.

"International competitiveness and enhanced export capability must be a key objective for African enterprises in those industrial subsectors where specific countries have a comparative advantage. Through its accumulated experience and expertise, UNIDO can play a major role in facilitating this major transformation in African economies.

"Africa Industrialization Day holds more than symbolic significance for those of us in Africa. It underscores our firm resolve to rise above our current difficulties and forge ahead with renewed confidence. It is a day when we rededicate ourselves to rebuilding our industries and returning our continent to the path of sustained economic recovery and development. I have every confidence that, with the collective support of the international community, the dream of African industrialization will soon become a reality".

I call next on the representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Rosario Green, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who will read out a message from the Secretary-General.

Ms. Green: (Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs) It is my pleasure this morning to read out the following message from the Secretary-General:

"The twentieth of November is Africa Industrialization Day. It is the day when Africa celebrates its achievements in the field of industry and commits itself to industrialization as part of its development goals. I am pleased to join in the celebration of these goals and achievements.

"I would especially like to underline the importance of the Day for the United Nations system as a whole.

"African development is perhaps the single greatest challenge facing the international

community. Increasingly, the world community is beginning to recognize the vital need to support Africa's efforts for stability, social progress and the eradication of hunger and disease.

"Industry has an essential role in economic and social development. Industrial growth will be a key component of progress in Africa. The needs are there in abundance, but so are the natural and human resources. What is required of us is the full commitment of all the development partners to greater and special efforts.

"The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s provides the framework within which the United Nations system will support economic and social progress in Africa in the years to come. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Economic Commission for Africa and other parts of the United Nations system, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, are committed to working closely together to advance the objectives of the Programme for the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa. I would like to take this opportunity to assure African countries of my full support for their efforts in industrialization and of my determination that the United Nations system shall give of its best in providing support to them.

"The mobilization of the United Nations system in support of development has been a special priority for me as Secretary-General. The preparation of Country Strategy Notes is an important part of this effort. Through this process, the United Nations system mobilizes its efforts in support of country priorities — as determined by the country itself. Let me assure the Assembly that the needs of industrial development will be taken fully into account in this process.

"The theme of this year's Africa Industrialization Day is the private sector. It is a particularly appropriate theme because it is the private sector that will have the principal role to play in generating successful industrial growth, as the example of other parts of the world shows us. Because the industrial sector in Africa is small at present, this will be a demanding role. Foreign investment can help, and must be encouraged. The right industrial policies and support institutions are essential, and African Governments are taking many of the steps needed. However, it is the African industrialists, large and small, who will face the greatest challenge and who need all our support.

"Let us wish them well. Together, let us encourage the international community to give them the support they need and deserve in confronting the challenges that lie ahead".

Agenda item 112 ***(continued)***

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (Article 19 of the Charter) (A/49/400/Add.6)

The President (*interpretation from French*): In a letter contained in document A/49/400/Add.6, the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communications dated 20 and 26 September, 5 and 14 October and 3 and 9 November 1994, the Gambia has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 158 ***(continued)***

Report of the International Conference on Population and Development: report of the Conference (A/CONF.171/13 and Add.1)

Mr. Acharya (Nepal): The approval of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development by consensus was an important achievement. The Cairo Conference firmly established the link between population and sustainable development. It also made it very clear that the empowerment of women was absolutely essential for a successful population programme.

The Conference further spelt out the role and necessity of international cooperation in addition to the actions required at the national level. The need to work in partnership with the non-governmental organizations and the private sector was also emphasized. The Programme of Action is a comprehensive package aimed at achieving a delicate balance between population and development.

For all this to happen, proper planning, full commitment and a clear sense of purpose were required. This achievement would not have been possible but for the conviction, courage and determination of the people of the host country — the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The timely and successful holding of the Conference was also made possible by the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mrs. Nafis Sadik, who provided strong leadership. The Conference would have been lost had not all the participants — Member States, observer States and others — shown the understanding and support that the Conference rightly deserved.

The Cairo Conference, in the view of my delegation, was not just another meeting for the benefit of a few. If implemented fully within the stipulated time frame, the Programme of Action approved by the Conference has the capacity to transform the lives of billions. Mrs. Sadik, the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), is therefore quite right in stating that the Programme of Action has the potential to change the world.

My delegation believes that any programme that has a capacity to change the world, and for the better, deserves serious attention and full support. Lack of implementation of this Programme would be bound to adversely affect the entire world. The Programme, as agreed, puts the major burden on the developing countries. It expects domestic resource mobilization to cover two thirds of the costs of implementing the Programme, which will run into the billions of dollars. The Programme seeks the other third of the cost from external sources. Clearly, there is a need for new and additional resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action for population and development activities.

Given the political will, the international community can shoulder this responsibility at a lesser cost now. However, the burden on the developing countries, particularly on the least developed, would be enormous. Fully cognizant of the additional hardships to come, we are ready to do our best to implement the Programme of Action in cooperation with the international community.

The importance of institutional follow-up to the Conference cannot be overemphasized. National, subregional and regional activities have been outlined, but the international responsibility, particularly the role and support of the United Nations system in the successful implementation of the Programme, is equally important. It is incumbent on the General Assembly and on the Economic and Social Council to carry out an in-depth assessment of the roles, responsibilities, mandates and comparative advantages of the intergovernmental bodies and organs of the United Nations in addressing population and development issues.

Mr. Sucharipa (Austria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We must make the best use of the United Nations expertise and resources without jeopardizing the objectives and the actions set out in the Programme of Action. This obviously requires strengthening the population-related organs of the United Nations, and particularly the elaboration of the concept of a separate executive board for the UNFPA. This new institutional arrangement should have only one purpose: effective support for the timely implementation of the Programme of Action. However, its successful implementation depends on the full and unqualified support of all actors. The stakes are very high for each one of us.

Mr. Rowe (Australia): A key objective of Australia at the International Conference on Population and Development was to work for international consensus on a Programme of Action that was strong and forward-looking and that would guide population and development programmes into the twenty-first century.

The Cairo Conference achieved unprecedented international agreement on the central development issues of sustainable development, human rights and the promotion of individual choice. Cairo recognized that enabling women to determine their goals in life and to make their own choices is essential to sustainable development and to slowing population growth. The success of population policies depends in large measure on gender equality, the equitable participation of women in decision-making, and education, especially for women and girls. Australia is very pleased that the Programme of Action is particularly strong on all these counts.

The Programme of Action enshrines the principles of freedom of choice and non-coercion in family planning programmes, but takes a strong position on making available the means to exercise that choice. This approach is consistent with Australia's development assistance programmes. In accord with the goals contained in the Programme of Action, Australia has also put in place new guidelines which seek to ensure that

coercion does not occur in population programmes funded through its Development Cooperation Programme.

The Cairo Conference achieved much; our task now is to transform the words into reality. With the Conference over, there is a need to ensure that the momentum of the reform process is not lost.

Australia will be working hard to ensure that the commitments made at Cairo are followed through in Copenhagen and Beijing. We also look to the Economic and Social Council to fulfil its role in the coordination of the follow-up process among the relevant United Nations agencies, and we call for active field-level support by Resident Coordinators for the measures taken by United Nations agencies to assist countries in implementing the Conference's Programme of Action. We also look to the active involvement of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other agencies in implementing the Programme of Action. On the question of a separate executive board for UNFPA, we note that this issue has not so far inhibited a high profile for population and development concerns. We therefore suggest that further consideration be given to this matter at a later date.

The Cairo documents address the central problem facing all humanity: to balance population, development and natural resources, while promoting choice and human rights. They establish the principles on the basis of which we can attack that problem, individually and together.

The Programme of Action recognizes that significant additional resources will be required to translate the goals of Cairo into reality. The Australian Government has taken steps to meet that objective. Australia has already trebled funding for population and development activities. These programmes emphasize the provision of high quality voluntary reproductive health services which are integrated with programmes focusing on women's empowerment, their health and education. In addition, earlier this year the Australian Government announced a substantial new four-year health initiative which doubles spending in this sector.

All Member States are, of course, committed to assessing and reporting on their progress in implementing the Programme of Action. This is a commitment which Australia is taking very seriously. A detailed examination of the Programme of Action has been initiated by the Government. The review is aimed at providing an overview of Australia's position in relation to the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action. With regard to our domestic situation, Australia meets standards at a national level but needs to continue to address the needs of particular groups, such as indigenous peoples, people in rural and remote areas and people from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

The centrality of international migration issues for the international community was reflected in the intense discussions at Cairo on family reunion. This is an issue which went beyond economic or political groupings, reflecting the far-reaching nature of people movements. The migratory landscape over the last few decades has changed dramatically, with most traditional sending countries now also being receiving ones. Greater economic linkages, economic graduations and political or natural events will maintain pressure on the unprecedented level of movement of people around the globe.

Australia strongly supports the concept of family migration and has already reflected this concept in its national legislation. Such migration represented well over half Australia's migrant intake in 1993 to 1994. Australia will also continue to play a strong role in the resettlement of refugees.

Accordingly, Australia welcomes the proposal that an international conference on migration be convened by the United Nations. The conference will need to be carefully planned to ensure that it approaches international migration issues in a way that does not overlap with the important work of other international organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Australia will be ready to play its part in that process.

Mr. Sersale di Cerisano (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: As we approve the report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Argentina is in effect repeating the statement it made during consideration of the Programme of Action in Cairo, which can be found in document A/CONF.171/13.

We welcome endorsement of the Programme of Action adopted in Cairo on 13 September 1994 and congratulate Mrs. Sadik and her colleagues on their efforts in the preparation of the Programme. We also congratulate the Government of Egypt on its excellent arrangements and the support it gave to the Conference.

We fully support the statement by the Chairman of the Group of 77, who spoke of the general approach of

the Programme of Action, and therefore we will not refer to the contents of the various chapters. We believe that on this occasion we should concentrate on the items left open in Cairo: follow-up machinery for the Programme of Action — Chapter XVI — and several policy items dealing with international migration. In both cases, the Group of 77 will present proposals which we hope can be discussed in the coming days.

Nevertheless, allow we to state what we think should be the main policy guidelines for institutional machinery. We believe there are four levels at which the analysis should be made: first, the General Assembly, where policies should be decided; secondly, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), where programmes of competent bodies in the system should be coordinated; thirdly, a functional commission of ECOSOC on population and development with a mandate in keeping with the inter-sectoral nature of the Programme of Action and capable of follow-up policy-making on the Programme; and, fourthly, an executive board of the United Nations Population Fund capable of providing operational follow-up to the Programme.

To have a clear idea of the institutional follow-up machinery and how the four levels will interact requires a report from the Secretary-General detailing budgetary implications and including information about the necessary logistical support from the Secretariat. We hope to be able to take a final decision on this matter, on the basis of this report, towards the middle of next year.

With regard to international migration, chapter X contains important policy recommendations which we support. Nevertheless, this item of the multilateral agenda has still not been sufficiently discussed in all its dimensions. Argentina believes that the United Nations must include international migration and development as a specific item on its multilateral agenda, to answer the many questions posed in Cairo which have not yet been resolved. The United Nations system is the right framework for this task. In addition, we support what the representative of Australia said about convening a conference on this subject. Argentina is sympathetic to this initiative and is prepared to take part in the process.

In conclusion, we wish simply to repeat that Argentina is committed to the implementation of the recommendations in the Programme of Action at all levels, particularly the regional level.

Mr. Güven (Turkey): The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, constitutes a crucial milestone in the global thinking on population issues. We all agree that improving the quality of life in a sustainable manner is our common and major goal. However, this requires integrated policies on population, development and environmental issues. Population policies, though an essential element of sustainable development, are not sufficient on their own if they are not implemented through effective programmes. These programmes, on the other hand, can be successful only when they stem from a synthesis of a multisectoral approach and are shaped to address the needs of society. These considerations are duly emphasized in the Programme of Action adopted by the Cairo Conference. Turkey, which has long experience in development planning, has recognized sustained economic growth and population factors to be integral parts of its development policy and programme efforts.

The measures and programmes we adopt with the aim of affecting and changing population variables — such as the size, growth, distribution and quality of population — in accordance with the needs of societies are essential components of population policies. They in turn constitute an integral part of social-development policies. Therefore, the interlinkage and interaction between these factors are fundamental elements to be taken into account in developing social and economic policies.

At the national level, Governments, in cooperation with, and through the active involvement of, parliamentarians, local authorities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and women's groups, should work to increase awareness of population and development issues by giving the utmost emphasis to elementary education, gender equality and development of human resources. At the international level we have to concert our action and cooperate with each other in order to achieve our common goals expeditiously.

We believe that the Cairo Conference has fulfilled its main objective. The Programme of Action will have more value if it is implemented in all countries. Nations will implement it in accordance with their religious and moral values, aiming, however, at the objectives formulated therein. The contents of this document are valuable, and Turkey commits itself to its full implementation.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to express our deep appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Egypt, which perfectly organized this historic Conference of such magnitude.

Turkey, which will host the Habitat II Conference in 1996, will benefit from the experience gained by the Government of Egypt and do its utmost to ensure the success of Habitat II, which is destined to be a major step forward in the implementation of decisions taken at the Earth Summit in Rio. Also taken into consideration will be the relevant provisions of the Cairo Programme of Action and the outcome of other Conferences and meetings which will take place in the meantime as a follow-up to Rio.

Mr. Junejo (Pakistan): Today we stand with great hope and expectation at the threshold of a new century. Mankind has made some significant achievements over the past few decades. Technological advancement and geopolitical changes hold the promise of a future in which the aspirations of the human race to a peaceful and secure existence are realized. The Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference and Development at Cairo provides a framework for the implementation of national population and development strategies that would contribute towards the betterment of the human individual.

Addressing the Conference, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto pointed out that

> "the choices we make today will affect the future of mankind." (*A/CONF.171/13/Add.1, annex II, p. 27*)

We gathered in Cairo to take decisions that will leave our imprint on history. We made a commitment to work for the betterment of the human individual and, through the individual, the security of the nation-State. Strategies, policies and plans that do not advance the cause of human dignity have little chance of success. At Cairo we placed the human being at the centre of our decisions. The Programme of Action is therefore bound to have a direct impact on the lives of millions.

My delegation would like to thank His Excellency President Hosni Mubarak and the Government and the people of Egypt for their gracious hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the Conference. We would also like to congratulate the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the success of the Cairo Conference. I would add that without Mrs. Nafis Sadik's personal involvement and the efficient work of her small secretariat the Conference may not have been able to achieve its landmark results.

Political commitment at the highest level is required for finding solutions to our concerns about the growing world population. Pakistan is committed to the implementation of the Programme of Action. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's participation in the high-level debate of the Conference, despite all the internal and external pressures, underscored this fact. It was clear evidence of her personal commitment to arresting our high rate of population growth.

At the global level, at no other time in history has the question of a fast-growing world population gained such significance as it has today. The matter has acquired alarming proportions. The ability of countries and policy makers to deal with the multiplying demands of their expanding populations entails some fundamental questions and requires some serious thinking that can be translated into action-oriented strategies. Cairo provided us an opportunity to put together our collective energies and individual experiences to formulate policies at the international level. This would strengthen our efforts at the national level to deal with issues of population and development. Prime Minister Bhutto has stressed that it is imperative that, in the field of population control, global strategies and national plans work in unison.

The success of Cairo is the success story of not just an international conference: it reflects a genuine commitment by the international community to lay aside all differences of opinion. At Cairo we arrived at a consensus on actions that can be carried out in all the countries of the world. The implementation of the entire Programme of Action must, however, be guided by the chapeau of chapter II, "Principles". The chapeau underscores that the implementation of the recommendations in the Programme of Action is the sovereign right of each country and that such implementation should be in accordance with the religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of its people. Any document that does not take into account the culture and religious and cultural sensitivities of the target population cannot be effective.

Technological advancement and financial stability have allowed a handful of developed countries to assure security to the individual. We in the developing world are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the demands of the individual and society. History has shown that as nations develop there is a concomitant decrease in their

rates of population growth. This has been the pattern in most developed countries. Development is a critical prerequisite for serious population-control strategies. Development is achievable only if it is accompanied by sustained economic growth.

The development process cannot gather momentum if the global economy lacks dynamism and stability and is beset with uncertainties. Neither will it gather momentum if the developing countries are weighted down by external indebtedness, if development finance is inadequate, if barriers restrict access to markets and if commodity prices and terms of trade remain depressed. Policies and measures needed to create an international environment that is strongly supportive of national development efforts are vital. Such development efforts that focus on enhanced health care and education, the empowerment of women and the generation of employment would be the best guarantee of population control.

The post-cold-war period cannot sustain the former patterns of inter-State relations. This new era is characterized by mutual dependency. The need for a new partnership was reiterated at Cairo, and this partnership is based on the principle of mutual benefits.

To tackle the multiple concerns of population growth, the increasing civil strife in some parts of the world, which is tearing down the structures of society, the scourge of disease and trans-border migration, which is leading to xenophobia, the developed countries need the assistance of the developing world. We are ready for this partnership, which would allow for the creation of a healthier and happier world.

I come from a region in which more than 30 per cent of the world's poorest live. They may be poor, but they are the most ingenious and hard-working people, who, when provided with the opportunity, always excel. We are committed to creating the appropriate opportunities for our people. It is critical that in this era of partnership the developed countries join hands with us in South Asia and help us to ensure that our people are uplifted economically.

Societies that have recognized and accepted women as equals have moved swiftly on the path to development. Women's empowerment and equality of status are critical to the success of policies — especially those that relate to population control. In its chapter on the empowerment of women, the Programme of Action represents some important strides. This chapter proposes action in some critical areas — action that would contribute towards the full participation of women in all spheres of life.

We are convinced that the traditional family is the bedrock of our society. Arguing strongly in favour of the family as the basic unit on which any society rests, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto pointed out that the disintegration of the traditional family has contributed to moral decay. We support all recommendations in the Programme of Action that call for strengthening of the family unit.

With regard to the follow-up mechanism of the Programme of Action, my delegation stresses the importance of adhering to the recommendations in Chapter XVI — especially paragraphs 16.25 through 16.27. These paragraphs recommend that the General Assembly, at its forty-ninth session, consider the question of a separate executive board for the United Nations Population Fund and that the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session in 1995, review the respective roles of the bodies within the United Nations system that deal with population and development issues. Only after a review of the roles of these bodies will it be possible to identify the appropriate follow-up mechanism. This agreement must be fully implemented. If the General Assembly is unable to consider the need for a separate executive board this year, the matter should be taken up by the Economic and Social Council next year.

I sincerely hope that the commitments made at this Conference will be fully implemented so that the integration of population policies and development efforts may be secured. We are determined to ensure that the implementation of these decisions will lead to the uplifting of the individual.

Mr. Allarey (Philippines): I should like to begin by paying tribute to the Government and the people of Egypt for their success in hosting the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo last September. Our thanks and appreciation go also to Mrs. Nafis Sadik for her commendable leadership and for the skilful manner in which she discharged her duties as Secretary-General of the Conference.

The Philippines took an active part in the Conference. Thus, we are committed to the objectives of its Programme of Action. These objectives are closely aligned with the goals of our country's medium-term development plan. The attainment of the status of a newly industrialized country envisaged by President Fidel

V. Ramos's "Philippines 2000" is anchored in a three-pronged strategy: human resource development, international competitiveness and macroeconomic stability. These three goals have a common denominator — the population factor.

Our concept of development recognizes that sustained development depends not only on Government action but also on initiatives of individuals, families and communities, as well as cooperatives and non-governmental organizations. Therefore the key to national development is people empowerment. This is based on the development philosophy that it is ultimately the individual, within the context of his family and community, who constitutes both the basis and the goal of economic growth and sustainable development. If policy making is to be made responsive and relevant to the realities of daily life, Governments must take into account the collective aspirations, choices and decisions of individuals and families.

The Philippine Constitution recognizes the family as the foundation of the Filipino nation. It is the task of government to strengthen the solidarity of the family and to promote its total development. The family serves as a focal point for analysis of what people need and how they use available resources and for the mobilization of the energy of people towards progress and development.

Women comprise half of the Philippine population. They are inevitably involved in the phenomenon of rapid population growth. The effects of this growth on the more than 30 million Filipino women are manifested in the feminization of poverty, the marginalization of female urban workers, the exploitation of overseas women workers, maternal depletion and, in general, women's subjugation to social inequities such as inferior education, low-paying jobs and discriminatory hiring and promotion policies. All these conditions are related to the phenomenon of violence against women. Any national development framework should recognize the centrality of women in the economic and social development process, in the bearing and rearing of children and in employment that includes not only domestic work but also productive economic activity, such as sustenance agriculture, wage-paying jobs and trading. Such a framework should guide the harnessing of half of the country's human resources — women — and should ensure their impact on national development goals.

The increasing participation of women in the workplace has not been accompanied by a convergence in earnings between Filipino males and Filipino females. This is indicative of discriminatory practices. An example of these is to be found in the fact that the edge that women have over men in levels of higher education has not been translated into employment opportunities.

Women should be able to contribute to development without sacrificing their dignity. Today's family could serve as a major paradigm of protest against the typecasting of women as having a role subordinate to that of men, who are privileged — wittingly or unwittingly — by their resistance to sharing household tasks and child care. The empowerment of women should include the resolution of conflicts between their reproductive and their economically productive roles, the sharing by men in the maintenance of the household and male participation in the redefinition of gender relations. All these things affect the true meaning of development itself.

Improving the status of women could reduce this conflict and lessen the concomitant burden passed on to women, through the equal sharing of responsibilities in parenthood and household activities between men and women and through equal opportunities for productive employment.

Migration patterns are a collective expression of many individual and family decisions in response to socio-economic changes and imbalances that affect their needs and aspirations. Socio-economic inequities and population growth fuel both internal and international migration. However, benefits derived from overseas remittances which are largely utilized for consumption rather than investment purposes can perpetuate dependence on other economies. This could inhibit the self-sustaining and self-reliant growth of local and national economies.

My Government has responded to issues of welfare and protection for the growing numbers of Filipino migrant workers. This concern has assumed much importance in the programmes of related Government agencies in view of the realization that the economic contribution of overseas remittances by Filipino migrant workers — estimated to be 4 per cent of gross national product — will have to be balanced against the social effects of temporary separation of family members.

The Philippine Foreign Secretary, Roberto Romulo, in his statement to the General Assembly on 5 October last, called for a United Nations global conference on migration. The call was based on the great interest shown during the International Conference on Population

and Development in Cairo in such a conference. Together with some equally interested and concerned delegations from Africa and Latin America, my delegation is presenting to the Second Committee, through the Group of 77 and China, a draft resolution stressing the importance of international migration under the auspices of the United Nations.

Government is engaged in activities from which non-governmental organizations are relatively detached in administering programme activities aligned with overall population and development goals. A stronger partnership between my Government and non-governmental organizations has been forged to achieve the goals and objectives spelled out in the Programme of Action. Towards this end, it is important that Government should continue to collaborate with and enhance the potential of non-governmental organizations in strengthening grass-roots networks and community participative strategies.

My Government subscribes to the principle that health is a fundamental human right. Indeed, our Constitution, the basic law of our country, recognizes the sanctity of human life. In various forums, we have categorically stated that our laws reject abortion as a method of family planning. We also have safeguards against coercion. We have, instead, made available a full range of information and services on all legally permissible and medically acceptable family-planning methods in order that couples should have options for the exercise of their freedom of choice. There is universal access to these services to enable us to lower significantly the incidence of illegal and unsafe abortions.

There are also other considerations that for us rank high in the implementation of the Programme of Action. They are, *inter alia*, respect for religious and ethical values, cultural mores, norms and beliefs; participative and consultative approaches; and the couple's freedom and autonomy. We have intensified the formation of public and private service delivery outlets focusing on information, education and communication efforts, and the training of service providers in the technical and management aspects of their work, as well as monitoring and research activities. We are improving the public acceptance of the Philippine Family Planning Programme, which includes information, education and communication materials featuring health benefits and explaining the risks associated with unplanned pregnancies. These messages are uniformly being disseminated at the information and counselling level with the assistance of various advocacy groups.

The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development is the product of countless hours of study, deliberation and negotiation. It contains elements such as the environment, health, gender equality, education, migration, technology and research. In short, the Programme of Action is a framework that could be the basis for policy formulation, and its successful implementation could improve the quality of our lives. All the Conference's Programme of Action needs now is the political will to enhance the individual's choices and opportunities.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) *(interpretation from Arabic):* At the outset, I have the pleasure of extending my delegation's thanks to the Arab Republic of Egypt, for the efforts that led to the success of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). I should like to seize this opportunity to pay tribute to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), led by Mrs. Nafis Sadik, for the valuable support the Fund continues to extend to population-related activities and for the effective role the Fund performed in ensuring the Conference's success.

The varying levels of development and living standards between various countries, persistent poverty and the aggravation of that phenomenon in certain regions, the acceleration of internal migratory movement of populations, the scarcity of natural resources, the aggravation of the problem of pollution and the overall fragility of the ecosystem are phenomena that create major and urgent challenges which we must address. To do that, we have to engage in dialogue, consultation and exchange of views, as the issues involved have to do with the current situation and the very future of our world and impact on humanity's aspirations after democracy, stability and prosperity for all.

Proceeding from this, Tunisia, which accords to population policy a high priority and puts it at the forefront of the means whereby it may achieve its objectives and implement its development plans, welcomes the positive results achieved at the Cairo Conference. In that Conference, there was broad consensus on the importance of those issues, on their close relationship with population problems and on the need to integrate them into developmental action as essential elements in the formulation of economic and social policies and programmes.

In this respect, I should like to refer to Tunisia's experience in the field of population and the effect this has had on comprehensive sustainable development in relation to various sectors which constitute the basic underpinning of the equilibrium and cohesion of the family and of society. Women and children are given a high priority in this integrated policy. Thanks to the measures it has taken, Tunisia has achieved positive results in the area of population. Indeed, that rate of demographic growth fell from 3 per cent in the 1960s to a current low of under 2 per cent. To be sure, none of these results could have been achieved were it not for the efforts deployed by Tunisia in such areas as health, social security coverage and education, particularly that of girls.

Family planning had a role to play in the achievement of such results. Educational campaigns have heightened public awareness of the importance of family planning in ensuring the integrity and balance of the family, especially when family planning was integrated into health-care services. However Tunisia's population concerns have not been limited to the reduction of the rate of demographic growth, but have embraced such qualitative questions as the country's demographic structure, the distribution of the population, internal migration and urban development.

The thrust of the Programme of Action adopted at the Cairo Conference has demonstrated the soundness of Tunisia's options in the area of population and development. It highlighted the prevailing awareness of everybody's responsibility towards future generations within the context of a view that attempts to reconcile present concerns with the legitimate aspiration after a better future in which the human individual is given the status of the focal factor in and the main beneficiary of development. As the Programme of Action put it, success in solving population and development problems will largely depend on strengthening cooperation amongst all countries of the world through beneficial communication and mutual respect that takes into account the distinctive characteristics and scale of priorities of every society.

While we welcome the ambitions embodied in the Programme of Action, we wish to emphasize at the same time the need for providing additional financial resources that would make it possible to achieve the objectives set out in the Programme and to realize the aspirations of our peoples after sustainable development. Our developing countries, which bear the brunt of population pressures in addition to the demands of sustainable development, are the countries that bear the burden of external indebtedness and debt servicing with all that that entails in terms of diminishing the capabilities of those countries and scale down the resources that may be available to them for financing environmental and population projects. It is in this context that Tunisia's President called upon the international community to invest the debt servicing dues of developing countries in population and environmental programmes, in keeping with the objectives of the Programme of Action. While we note with satisfaction the readiness of certain States to take action in line with this proposal, we look forward to a much wider and a more robust response.

Population problems today have a close link with the phenomenon of demographic explosion under the heavy burden of which many developing countries are now languishing. This is a phenomenon whose effects in the area of international migration must be given the attention they deserve. Given all the ramifications of the migration problem, Tunisia feels that controlling this phenomenon should be one of the high priorities of the international community in view of its implications for the countries of origin and the countries of destination alike.

We consider that the phenomenon of migration cannot be brought under control unless appropriate conditions are made to exist in the countries of origin to achieve growth and the required level of job opportunities. This underscores the responsibility of all countries, developed and developing alike, in bringing this phenomenon under control through close cooperation between all the parties concerned, especially that the prospects of population growth tend to indicate that the migration problem will be with us for a long time and that the measures proposed in the Programme of Action do not make it possible to face up to the problems involved in a comprehensive manner. Proceeding from this, Tunisia has made a point, at the International Conference on Population and Development, of calling for an international colloquium to bring together all the countries concerned with the problem of migration so that they may study the issues involved from their various aspects. We feel that it is the duty of the international community to accord more attention and care to the status and future of communities working abroad, not only in keeping with the need to uphold human rights, but also in view of the contributions those communities make to the economies of the developed countries of destination.

While reiterating this call which has been supported by many States and organizations, we call upon the General Assembly to adopt a resolution at its present

session on convening an international conference on migration and to make preparations to ensure that such a conference convenes before 1997.

The population problem, which has a very special place in the priorities of development programmes, is now at the forefront of all countries' concerns both at the national level and at the level of many an international forum, in view of its impact on the equation of sustainable development. Population growth must decelerate if there is to be greater prosperity for citizens, a more equitable sharing of resources, greater productive employment and a broader dissemination of culture.

In this context, Tunisia calls for the strengthening of cooperation amongst all countries of the world through an exchange of expertise and experience in this field and the formulation of a strategy that takes into account the interests of all, especially those of the developing countries and that will make it possible for us as an international community to promote the prospects of harmonious development for the countries of the North and the South.

Mr. Azikiwe (Nigeria): It is about two months now since the international community met in Cairo, Egypt, for the International Conference on Population and Development, with the aim of drawing up a 20-year plan of action to address the issues of population and development. We went to Cairo with great hopes, though aware of the critical nature of our task and the controversies surrounding some of the issues before the Conference. However, on account of the spirit of give and take, tolerance and a conducive atmosphere of international understanding, we were able to adopt a Programme of Action by consensus.

We now have before us the report of the Conference. We commend the President of the Conference, President Mubarak, the Conference Bureau and its Secretary-General for guiding the Conference to a successful conclusion. It must be mentioned however, that this success was achieved through difficult negotiations, from the sessions of the Preparatory Committee through to the final Conference. As a result of negotiations, the conceptual framework of the Programme of Action was modified, *inter alia*, to address broad development and health issues. The inevitable introduction of the moral and ethical dimensions of certain issues by several delegations nearly stalled the Conference. In these circumstances, it would appear that the consensus reached, which bridged the gap between the opposing groups, was heroic. It is hoped that the presentation of this report will not reopen the debate, but move us forward to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

The Nigerian delegation joined in the consensus adoption of the report of the Conference, on the understanding that due respect would be given to national sovereignty and the differences in each country's laws, religious and cultural values in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference.

Furthermore, our delegation believes that any meaningful population policy must be people-centred. We also recognize that the empowerment of women and gender equality are vital in ensuring sustainable development. As a developing country with an enormous population, Nigeria cannot but be an active partner in the quest for a solution to the problems of population and sustainable development.

It is our ardent hope that the Programme of Action thus adopted will be backed by financial support, as envisaged. It would also be proper for donor countries to consider specific targets of assistance to improve equal access to education for the girl child, to reduce infant and maternal mortality and to provide appropriate and adequate reproductive health services. In this regard, we would urge improved inter-agency cooperation between the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization and other relevant United Nations agencies in order to ensure overall and effective implementation of the Programme of Action, not only at the international level, but also at the regional and national levels.

We hope that the momentum generated and the political will demonstrated in Cairo will be carried forward to the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in 1995, and the World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen in 1995, where the issues of population and development will resurface.

I commend the report for adoption.

Mr. Mongbe (Benin): Coming to the rostrum after some excellent speakers, especially my brother, Ambassador Lamamra of Algeria, who spoke on behalf of the Member States of the Group of 77 and China, I

shall deliver only a supplement to all the relevant observations and interesting proposals heard during this rich debate on the International Conference on Population and Development, which was held in the beautiful and historic capital of Egypt in September.

We already have some substantial milestones on the road towards sustainable development: the memorable United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in June 1992; the establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development by the Economic and Social Council, and the holding of its first two sessions, in June 1993 and May 1994; the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, organized in Bridgetown, Barbados, in April-May this year; and the adoption, in Paris on 17 June this year, of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa.

It is clear that the International Conference on Population and Development is a new milestone, which supplements the existing ones and to which will be added the results of the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in March 1995 in Copenhagen, the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in September 1995, and the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, to be held in Istanbul in June 1996.

The Cairo Conference could not have succeeded without the personal commitment of President Hosni Mubarak, the exceptional arrangements made by the Government of Egypt and the traditional warm hospitality of the Egyptian people, whose glorious history, covering thousands of years, needs no further comment. My delegation would like to express once again its gratitude and esteem.

Special mention should be made of Mrs. Nafis Sadik, the Secretary-General of the Conference, supported by a team of competent, efficient colleagues whose valuable assistance was always available to participants.

What can we say about the boundless dedication of Mr. Fred Sai of Ghana, Chairman of the Main Committee, and of Ambassador Nicolaas Biegman of the Netherlands and Ambassador Lionel Hurst of Antigua and Barbuda, Chairmen of the two Working Groups, who showed exceptional diplomatic skill in saving the Conference from its many crises?

Now that the media's cameras are no longer pointed at the participants in the Conference, we can more quietly analyse the results of our work and our achievements in terms of the Programme of Action.

First, my delegation deplores the fact that, despite all the precautions taken by the United Nations system and the host country, the Conference almost turned into a non-event because, intentionally or involuntarily, attention was diverted towards certain questions that were secondary to the Conference agenda and the content of the draft Programme of Action.

Indeed, great anxiety gripped all delegations during the first five days of the Conference, when no formulation acceptable to all the parties was found to matters concerning abortion, fertility control, sexuality and reproductive health — to mention only those. Five days of tension and of intense consultation could have been better spent in reflecting more deeply on how to balance population and development. However, these epic days did have the merit of clarifying positions and of drawing lessons which will certainly be helpful for similar exercises in the future.

This is the time and place to point out the immeasurable contribution that was made by religious and moral forces that helped us find humane solutions to controversial problems; without their support, we would have been left with our intentions as mere specialists.

I pay tribute in particular from this rostrum to the profound sense of responsibility of His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, who sounded the alarm when the debate, even before the Conference, had become somewhat surrealistic.

Despite all the ups and downs, there is reason to welcome the consensus which we reached — laboriously it is true — and which allowed us to adopt the Programme of Action. As such, the Programme is a masterpiece of compromise and, happily, not a masterpiece of capitulation — that is to say, it is a package of concessions made by all the participants in the Conference. It is not very surprising, therefore, that there are some who have expressed their disappointment or dissatisfaction with the contents of the Programme of Action, which must be considered and understood as a general guideline devised to help States draft national programmes of action to balance population problems and development problems. It is not a legally binding document, although it does commit the international

community to achieving qualitative goals in three intimately linked areas, namely: education, in particular the education of women of child-bearing age and girls; the reduction of infant, juvenile and maternal mortality; and the promotion of measures and actions to ensure universal access to family planning and to reproductive health services.

My delegation, while emphasizing those three qualitative objectives, would have liked more emphasis to be placed on development problems. In fact, the Conference was more concerned with controlling the rate of population growth than with any other matter. To be sure, controlling that rate is perhaps reassuring, but we should not forget that in Africa the density level of an economically useful population is far from having been reached. Let us silence the prophets of doom on this continent that for centuries has lost good brains and strong arms to other parts of the world, in conditions that I really cannot mention here. The real problem that the international community should help Africa solve in the matter of population and development could be summarized in four points: battling poverty in all its forms; improving the quality of human resources capable of promoting national, subregional and continental development; defining a development strategy that could marshal the acceptance and effective participation of all sections of the population; and democratizing political power in order to guarantee individual freedoms, respect for human rights, the establishment of a law-abiding State that promotes the stability of institutions and is a spearhead for economic and social development.

My delegation wholeheartedly hopes that within the framework of the implementation of the Programme of Action efforts and actions will be joined to mitigate the shortcomings and gaps and remedy the omissions. The present debate in the plenary Assembly is in itself a contribution to this.

Furthermore, the first phase of the implementation of the Programme of Action should be reflected in the draft resolution now being prepared in the Second Committee. That draft resolution must give clear indications of the roles, responsibilities, mandates and comparative advantages of the competent intergovernmental bodies, in particular, on the one hand, the Population Commission and, on the other, the bodies of the United Nations system that deal with matters of population and development — and I am referring to the United Nations Population Fund and the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis. Such indications must take into consideration the provisions of General Assembly resolution 48/162, regarding further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

Regarding the Population Commission, it is important to undertake three interrelated operations which stem from the results of the Cairo Conference: drafting new terms of reference and the mandate of the Commission to give it an intergovernmental structure instead of being merely a body of experts; taking account of the development dimension by renaming the commission the Population and Development Commission; and increasing to 53 the number of States members of the Commission with a three-year term. Such a change in the present Population Commission would help ensure the correct follow-up to and implementation of the Programme of Action and guarantee transparency in decision-making.

Furthermore, my delegation considers that the problem of divorcing or separating the United Nations Population Fund from the United Nations Development Programme — two bodies that now have the same governing board or executive committee — could not possibly be solved at this session of the General Assembly. The two partners could give each other mutual support until we have analysed the results of the implementation of the draft resolution to which I have referred, and after that we could consider the process of separation. But if the general trend is already to have two independent executive bodies, my delegation would not be opposed to this. As usual, my delegation will show flexibility and a spirit of understanding and responsibility.

Regardless of the decision that will be taken, Benin hopes that as part of the implementation of the Programme of Action the activities of the United Nations Population Fund will henceforth be directed more towards combating poverty and carrying out grass-roots development projects than towards any other forms of intervention whose direct impact on improving the living and working conditions of people is not immediately noticeable, or, should I say, palpable.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm Benin's position that it will participate responsibly in the patient quest for humanly acceptable solutions to the whole set of problems of population and development which in

many respects constitute one of the important parameters for sustainable development.

Mr. Azwai (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I should like to begin by paying tribute to the successful outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development and to avail myself of this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation and thanks to President Hosni Mubarak and to the Government and people of the Arab Republic of Egypt for their efforts that made the Conference a success. I should like also to extend our gratitude to Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the Conference, for the great efforts she deployed, and to all her collaborators, especially to Mr. Fred Sai and his colleagues.

Population policies are closely linked to economic growth, preservation of the environment and sustainable development. Although the spirit of detente and understanding has become uppermost in international relations, yet, we must admit that that spirit has not embraced all the problems that face the international community. There are many economic and social problems that have defied solution and the overall picture of economic growth is not very reassuring, particularly in many developing countries where development objectives have been frustrated. In view of this situation, it is necessary to deploy determined and concerted efforts to promote cooperation in all fields with the aim of formulating and implementing population policies that would guarantee prosperity and progress for all societies.

Any sound development policy should focus primarily on the individual human being, who is both the means and the end of development. It is unacceptable that poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy should be the lot of a fourth of the world's population, most of whom live in the third world. It is also unacceptable that three fourths of the world's income should fall to 16 per cent of the world's population namely the peoples of the developed countries. Such conditions cannot lead to sustainable and equitable development. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all countries to rethink their economic policies and strategies with the aim of accelerating international economic growth and achieving equitable development.

My country has always considered the human individual to be the focal point of all its economic, social and political concerns. Therefore, population questions have always been an integral part of Libya's overall social and economic development efforts that aim at raising the standard of living and improving the quality of life for all members of society without distinction. We have spared no effort in trying to achieve this goal within the framework of international and regional cooperation in the areas of economic growth and sustainable development.

My country has always accorded a very high priority to the population problem. We have done this by focusing on investment in such sectors as education, training, the integration of women in all the activities of society, general health care, housing, rural development, health care for women and children and in many other areas of human development. This has had the effect of raising the standard of living of the population in a short time. The rate of school enrolment has increased and the ratio of female school attendance has risen to 48.7 per cent in all levels of education in academic year 1992-1993. We have also achieved record levels of health care for all citizens. My country makes it a priority to provide suitable and healthy housing for all families, in the belief that housing is a fundamental human need. We are therefore doing our utmost to provide every citizen with a dwelling as well as with means of transportation and job opportunities.

Mr. Gujral (India), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In working for these goals, the housing programmes that have been included in our development plans since the 1970s have been expanded, and the necessary funds for building housing complexes have been allocated. Financing is also made available, through banks and housing cooperatives, to individuals who wish to build their own homes. In keeping with our housing policy, free housing is also provided for poor families on social security. Those efforts have led to the provision of a healthy dwelling for every Libyan family and we have been able to eliminate all the slums and shanty towns that used to exist on the outskirts of our larger cities. On the other hand, we are also providing social benefits for all those who are eligible with special emphasis on public utilities, which have been among the important sectors in our development programmes over the past few years.

My country also pays special attention to the development of rural areas in order to curb internal migration and relieve overcrowding in the larger cities. We have now succeeded in reversing internal migration. These efforts will culminate with the completion of the great artificial river project which would bring water from the desert to the arable land in the north of the country, on the shores of the Mediterranean.

The United Nations has always been a source of innovative approaches. Many of the ideas set forth by the United Nations have been adopted by the international community and have been incorporated in the national legislation of various countries. The conferences and events scheduled for 1995 and 1996 as well as for this year, will afford an opportunity to realistically evaluate what is actually achieved and to scientifically analyse the causes that impede the implementation of development plans and strategies. The outlines and parameters of what we have to do are clear enough. It is in the area of implementation that we fall short of what should be done. This is what we should focus on in future. United Nations bodies must play a greater role in reversing the negative trends that now prevail in the world by evaluating such challenges in a practical manner. The United Nations must play a major part in enhancing social development within a comprehensive framework that takes into account the global concept of development.

At a time when the international community, within United Nations guidelines, is striving to integrate the individual human being into development plans and to raise standards of living, one of the most important organs of the Organization, namely the Security Council, has been adopting decisions and resolutions that impose embargoes on certain peoples. The effects of such embargoes are felt most acutely by the most vulnerable sectors of society, namely children, women and the elderly. For instance, the embargo imposed by the Security Council on my country has caused and continues to cause great suffering to the Libyan people and has wrought great damage that is estimated at billions of dollars in every economic and social sector. In addition, lack of vaccines and other medicines has caused many deaths, including those of more than 350 infants. Some 150 women have died in childbirth because of lack of medication. Moreover, there have been accidents on domestic airline flights owing to the lack of spare parts that the Security Council prevents Libya from importing.

Some chapters of the Programme of Action are reasonably well balanced, while others are less so, especially where it concerns religious, cultural or moral issues that differ from one society to the other. Proceeding from religious values and principles which advocate freedom, justice and equality, my delegation wishes to reiterate what we affirmed at the Cairo Conference, namely that population policies and programmes should aim at creating a balance between population, development and resources within the context of respect for an observance of every people's religious beliefs, traditions and legislation. No country or culture has the right to impose its tenets or outlook on another. People should enjoy a natural family life and should be raised within normal families, in keeping with the tenets of all religions.

The modern phenomena of alienation, juvenile delinquency, the trafficking in children, drug abuse, sexual diseases such as acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) — particularly in the developed countries — result from the lack of natural family life and the disintegration of the family unit. We hope that the forthcoming international conferences, such as the Social Summit and the World Conference on Women, will find the necessary solutions to such problems.

I wish in conclusion to stress that the recommendations of the Cairo Conference can be applied only in the context of respect for the sovereign rights of all States, and in a manner that does not contradict the religious beliefs, cultural values and domestic legislation of any nation.

Mr. Horoi (Solomon Islands): My delegation welcomes the opportunity afforded by this debate to focus on the achievements of the recent International Conference on Population and Development and to express the strong support of my country, the Solomon Islands, for the Programme of Action it adopted.

Like the many speakers who preceded me, I wish to record my country's assessment of the process of the International Conference and of the Conference itself as one of major significance and achievement. Part of this success the international community owes to the host of the Conference, the Government and the people of Egypt, to whom we must extend our gratitude and appreciation. Solomon Islands is pleased to have participated fully in preparations for Cairo from an early stage of the process. As soon as the full mandate for the Conference was defined and the substantive preparatory process established, it was clear to us that the purpose of the Conference would be important to us. This has certainly proved to be the case. I would like to use this opportunity to explain why.

Solomon Islands has a population of slightly less than 350,000 people. By the standards of most other countries, this would be seen as presenting no challenge at all. Alongside this relatively small population, we have a growth rate of 3.5 per cent. This presents Solomon Islands with a doubling of its population in 20 years and places us towards the upper level in terms of

population growth. The consequences of such rapid population growth for a small, least-developed country such as the Solomon Islands made the Conference process and outcome particularly important. This was especially true given the Conference's emphasis on addressing the quality-of-life needs of all peoples, no matter how large or small their overall national population levels might be.

As we prepared for the Cairo Conference, our delegation was very pleased to work closely with other delegations from neighbouring Pacific Island countries, many of which have similar situations and face similar challenges in the area of population and development. For many of us the Cairo Conference process was our first international involvement with a population conference. There were 14 Pacific island delegations at Cairo, not an insignificant number in the overall total of 183 delegations. This compares to three Pacific island delegations at the 1984 Mexico City conference on population. We were very pleased to work closely with our Pacific neighbours, developing common positions on various aspects of the Programme of Action, both at the Preparatory Committee sessions and as the Conference's Main Committee completed work on the Programme of Action. The adoption by the countries of the Pacific region of the Port Vila Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development, in November 1993, was a further example of cooperation within our region and of commitment to the objectives of the Conference.

As a result of our collective efforts, Pacific delegations were able to feel a real sense of ownership of the Cairo Programme of Action and a commitment to the fulfilment of its directions. We now have before us in the Programme of Action a comprehensive yet realistic chart of the actions each member of the international community must take to fulfil the hopes and promises so clearly spelled out in Cairo. I am pleased to be able to say that Solomon Islands accepts fully the challenges contained in the Programme of Action. We are very conscious that we as a country must take the lead in fulfilling these commitments. As the same time, we must also accept the realities of our situation.

To meet the quantitative goals set in the Programme of Action will be a major task for my country. The provision of basic education and health care for all Solomon Islanders is certainly the objective we seek. To meet that objective over the 20-year period of the Programme of Action will require our continuing commitment and the steadfast and growing support of our development partners, both bilateral and multilateral.

It is for this reason that we are very encouraged by the commitment contained in the Programme of Action from the international community as a whole and especially from the developed countries that they will contribute fully and consistently to help our efforts. Without such a commitment, the Programme of Action will have little meaning for us and for many other developing countries.

Allow me to refer, in this context of international support, to the assistance Solomon Islands receives for its development, and particularly that from international organizations. We acknowledge with very real appreciation the assistance we have been receiving from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and all other United Nations funds and specialized agencies working in the area of population and development.

We wish to express particular thanks for the work of UNFPA's regional office for the South Pacific, which is based in Suva, Fiji. Its Regional Director, Mr. Faysal Abdel-Gadir, and his very able and dedicated staff are to be highly commended for their work, both in the context of UNFPA's Programme for the region and in the preparation for the Cairo Conference. Mention should also be made of the fine work of UNFPA's regional support team for the Pacific. This group of population and development technical specialists, drawn from all the major United Nations agencies, provides essential backstopping for our own national personnel.

I do not wish to conclude without expressing my country's very real appreciation to Mrs. Nafis Sadik, both in her capacity as the head of UNFPA and in her role as Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development. The leadership and determination she has demonstrated over many years with regard to the cause of population and development is in the finest tradition of the United Nations.

So, too, is the outcome of the Cairo Conference. Through the Conference process, the international community — countries, non-governmental groups and the United Nations system — has shown that it is able to address the challenges of our time and reach agreement on specific actions to resolve the problems we all face. My country was proud to be part of this great endeavour and is committed to the implementation of the Conference's Programme of Action.

Mr. Swain (Marshall Islands): I wish to again convey my congratulations and felicitations to the President, as well as to the other Assembly officers, and to commend him particularly for the manner in which he has steered the deliberations of this Assembly.

I also wish to take this opportunity to once more express my delegation's deep gratitude to the Egyptian Government and people for the warm hospitality and kindness they so readily extended to us during our stay in Cairo. The excellent arrangements made by, and the tireless efforts of, Mrs. Nafis Sadik and her able staff — some of whom are here in the Hall today — should also be acknowledged and commended.

I will begin my brief statement today by recalling that the Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development so aptly observed in Cairo that the Conference was a landmark event for all those involved in population and development, and for the billions of people who count on us to help them realize their hopes for the future.

The understanding of delegations led to the adoption of a Programme of Action which was described later as an expanded international policy on population and development. Implicit in that description is the fact that a spirit of compromise and consensus was witnessed in Cairo, a spirit that must be our guide at the implementation stage.

I wish now to highlight several matters related to the population and development issues raised in Cairo by my Minister of Health and Environment, issues which are of great importance to the Republic of the Marshall Islands and need to be dealt with at the earliest possible opportunity. They include reproductive health, the empowerment of women, the education of the girl-child and capacity building. The interconnectedness of these issues within the broader framework of sustainable development in general warranted their inclusion in the Programme of Action.

We attended the Cairo Conference with high hopes, expecting solutions to the development constraints unique to island environments such as ours. We still hope to see our aspirations successfully realized at the implementation stage, which will require a momentum similar to that witnessed in Cairo. I might add that the constraints we face are further compounded by one of the highest population growth rates in our region today — 4 per cent annually.

It goes without saying that the required momentum will involve following through on the commitment fully to bring to fruition the commonly used phrase "new global partnership". As I understand it, one third of the new and additional resources needed to implement the Programme of Action is now expected to come from external sources. This will be the impetus for the successful implementation of the Programme.

At the end of the Cairo Conference, Mrs. Sadik enthusiastically informed us that her Office would spare no effort in seeing through the implementation of the Programme of Action. There was profound foresight in her pledge, and we add our support to her efforts. In so doing, however, we fully realize that there is an immediate need for follow-up actions to the Cairo Conference at all levels to ensure full participation by all concerned parties. In this connection, we informally consulted with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) representative, based in Suva, Fiji, on the manner in which the follow-up work in our region should begin. Indeed, we are very anxious to discover how ongoing national actions can best be complemented or improved upon by external experience and expertise.

In this vein, we believe that while the roles, responsibilities and mandates of all relevant United Nations organs dealing with population and development issues should be reviewed and strengthened in the light of the Conference process, with a view to reflecting current realities, the immediate implementation of specific provisions of the Programme of Action should begin immediately. This institutional review must include the Population Commission, which we believe should be revitalized and restructured to become a Population and Development Commission, much like the Commission on Sustainable Development. Expansion of its membership, however, should be carefully considered in the light of transparency.

We view with great interest the proposal for a separate executive board of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). We note that some delegations have expressed reservations on the issue, and we believe that consideration of such a board can best be undertaken after careful review of all other boards called for in resolution 48/162, and since we do not have the time to do so at this session of the Assembly.

We realized at the Cairo Conference that major cultural, religious and philosophical differences divided us on population issues; yet we showed resolve in finding

solutions to common and immediate population issues that infringed on our ability to provide better living standards for our citizens. The Programme of Action — which, in our view, places the accent on national sovereignty — is evidence of this. Let us all uphold the principles outlined in chapter II of the Programme.

The time has come to undertake the follow-up work at all levels and to ensure full participation of all the parties concerned so as to prepare a better world for generations to come.

Mr. Pibulsonggram (Thailand): On behalf of the Thai delegation, let me first of all offer my sincere congratulations to Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development and her colleagues in the Secretariat for the immense efforts they put into making the Conference a success. Mrs. Sadik fully deserves our appreciation and tribute.

My delegation would also like to express its appreciation to Egypt for hosting the Conference in Cairo.

The International Conference on Population Development has produced a very major and comprehensive Programme of Action. It has incorporated in concrete and substantive ways the new concepts of development as envisaged in the international agreements of preceding United Nations Conferences. It will provide substantial inputs and contributions to the World Social Summit and the Fourth World Conference on Women, both to be convened in 1995, and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), to be convened in 1996. Its Programme of Action represents another significant step toward addressing the links between population, sustained economic growth, sustainable development and women's empowerment. It reflects the growing international awareness that population, poverty, patterns of production and consumption and the environment are so closely interconnected that none of them can be considered in isolation. It also acknowledges that both developed and developing countries have shared but differentiated responsibilities in bringing about sustainable development.

The Cairo Conference, to state the obvious, is not an end in itself. It is a beginning of a constructive and collective approach in dealing with the myriad global population issues. Its final success now depends on the willingness of Governments, local communities, non-governmental organizations, the international community and other concerned organizations and individuals to translate the Cairo Programme of Action into reality. In this context, my delegation would like to emphasize the essence of genuine partnership of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system in the field of operational activities. The dynamic role of non-governmental organizations and the private sector must not be ignored but, rather, recognized as an important and perhaps essential factor in obtaining the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action.

Thailand stands ready to cooperate with the international community in the implementation phase of the Programme of Action. At the national level, Thailand has integrated the World Population Plan of Action adopted at the first World Population Conference held in Bucharest in 1974 in its national population plan. At the same time, Thailand has reviewed and updated its population policies and strategies so that they would be more in line with the revised World Population Plan of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population held in Mexico City in 1984. The authorities concerned of the Thai Government are currently examining the Cairo Programme of Action and translating it, where applicable, to concrete programmes and projects for our Kingdom.

Thailand has also been pursuing an integrated development approach taking into account the interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development. In line with the Cairo Programme of Action, which places human beings at the centre of development — and rightly so — we believe that the key to this integrated approach lies in the development of human resources.

As part of our investment in human resources, family planning and reproductive health services have been placed at the top of Thailand's population agenda; the empowerment of women has also become a major focus. We welcome the goals of the Conference aimed at reducing infant, child and maternal mortality, and those which would provide universal access to reproductive health and family planning services. We also have placed emphasis on the importance of environmentally sound urban development in line with the objectives of the Cairo Programme of Action. Urban development in Thailand is of particular importance in light of the massive rural-to-urban migration occurring in Thailand. We therefore support the recommendations of the Conference concerning adequate protection and assistance to displaced persons.

Thailand believes that with regard to realizing the Conference's objectives, developing countries can achieve much more through cooperation than in isolation. For this reason, South-South cooperation is of particular importance. One example of Thailand's active participation in South-South cooperation is our membership in "Partners in Development: a South-South Initiative", which was formally established during the Conference and which has been particularly successful in the area of family planning. In pooling our experiences and resources and sharing what we have learned with other nations, we hope to further the Conference's goals.

Thailand has also established an active programme in support of technical cooperation among developing countries activities in general, and has been active in organizing South-South exchange programmes in the area of population. This has so far been mainly in the form of fellowships in community based family planning. We also plan to increase the number of exchange activities in the area of family planning and reproductive health, with special priority given to our neighbours. The United Nations Population Fund has contributed $1.2 million to support these activities.

At the international level, to reap the benefits of the Cairo deliberations on the implementation of the Programme of Action, political will must be backed by financial resources from public as well as private sectors, from non-governmental organizations or from the international community. Those among us that are capable of increased financial support for the Programme should do so.

Finally, Thailand is of the view that the Population Commission should have an important role to play in monitoring, reviewing and assessing the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, especially as it is linked to the issues of development and development planning. It should do so in close collaboration and cooperation with the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis and the United Nations Population Fund.

Thailand attaches great importance to the fulfilment of the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development, and, as stated earlier, Thai governmental agencies have already taken a number of actions consistent with the objectives of the Conference. But to ensure the complete success of the Conference, a concerted, cooperative international effort is required. Hence, we would like to reaffirm our readiness to join the international community in this enterprise in order to link the issues of population and all development planning and implementation in an integrated and comprehensive manner to ensure a better world for our children and for future generations.

Mrs. Leeds (United States of America): My delegation is grateful for the opportunity to share some of its ideas and concerns regarding the vital task of implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

In Cairo nearly 180 nations agreed on a forward-looking Programme of Action that embodies a comprehensive new approach to dealing with issues related to population and development. This new approach properly recognizes that population and development policies should give priority to reproductive health and family planning, education and empowerment of women, improved child survival, strengthening of families and promotion of sustainable economic development.

My delegation would like to congratulate Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Mr. Joseph Chamie and all the staff of the secretariat of the International Conference on Population and Development for their important part in making the Cairo Conference a stunning success. Thanks go also to the Government and the people of Egypt for being such gracious hosts for that historic Conference.

As we all celebrate our success in Cairo, we must keep in mind that the lasting importance of the Programme of Action depends on a determined effort by the international community to follow up on its implementation. This is no simple task. The Programme of Action has laid out a set of ambitious recommendations for policy and programme action and for mobilizing the resources necessary to move forward with implementation.

Achievement of the goals set forth in the Programme of Action and full integration of its many important elements will require a sustained and concerted effort by Governments, in partnership with non-governmental organizations, international agencies and the private commercial sector. United Nations agencies and international financial institutions have a key leadership role in follow-up, as outlined in chapter XVI of the Cairo Programme of Action. In particular, the chapter focuses on two priorities.

First, it focuses on coordinated follow-up action by United Nations agencies and international financial institutions. Implementation of the new comprehensive approach to population assistance will require a coordinated response by a number of United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Secretary-General of the United Nations should begin an inter-agency process to clearly define agency roles and responsibilities and ensure frequent working-level consultations among the agencies concerned. Better coordination is also needed among other donors, including the international financial institutions. This should include donor coordination at the field level involving host-Government officials so that country needs can be matched with available resources.

Secondly, chapter XVI focuses on regular monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action. We all agree that it is crucial to develop a monitoring system to track progress towards implementing the recommendations and achieving the goals defined in the Programme of Action. My delegation urges that three important points be kept in mind when designing this monitoring system.

First, the monitoring system should be active rather than passive. In other words, monitoring should involve more than reporting and compiling indicators. Countries should identify policy and programmatic obstacles to the full implementation of the Cairo recommendations, and United Nations agencies and other development partners should use this information to help overcome those obstacles.

Secondly, monitoring reports should be packaged to encourage their use by policy makers. These reports should be concise and action-oriented and include both quantitative and qualitative data. They should be designed to clearly communicate the issues to decision makers.

Thirdly, the monitoring system should not be overly burdensome on Governments. There has been a proliferation of monitoring requirements in recent years. These need to be harmonized and consolidated to reduce the burden on Governments and improve the quality and consistency of information. On the issue of who should be responsible for the monitoring system, my delegation suggests that the Population Division, in cooperation with other United Nations agencies, as appropriate, be asked to take the lead in compiling monitoring information and issuing a periodic report, no more frequently than biennially. The UNFPA and other specialized agencies with mandates for providing programme assistance would be important consumers of monitoring data, as would Governments, non-governmental organizations, the media and the general public.

We look forward to working in partnership with other countries and institutions to fully implement the landmark Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. Our collective responsibility is to take that vision and make it a reality.

Mr. Pak Gil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is pleased to have an opportunity to share its views with other Member States on agenda item 158, entitled "Report of the International Conference on Population and Development".

On behalf of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I would like to pay tribute to Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and other staff members for their energetic efforts geared towards the success of the international Conference on Population and Development. In particular, the UNFPA is to be commended for having made positive contributions towards addressing population issues during the past 25 years.

The International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo last September, provided an important occasion for a comprehensive review of the population issue in close linkage with sustainable development, and made a significant mark in promoting better understanding and awareness by the international community of the interrelationships of the issues of population and development. Those factors distinguished the Cairo Conference from the previous ones, held in 1974 and 1984.

The Conference also adopted, in a spirit of consensus, the Programme of Action containing the detailed objectives, principles and goals for resolving the population issue, as an integral task in achieving sustainable development. The adoption of the Cairo Programme of Action established a common view and an integrated world approach to population and development

issues, and was a milestone in that it provided a foundation for revitalized efforts by the international community to achieve sustainable development.

My delegation believes that the successful outcome of the Cairo Conference will be a positive contribution to the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, which are to be held next year.

The international community now faces the task of translating the Programme of Action into tangible results. In this context, my delegation believes that due attention should be paid to the following points with regard to the implementation of the Programme.

In implementing the Programme of Action, each country should give priority to the formulation of national population policies that are in conformity with the interests of its own people and suit its specific conditions and realities. Population is an issue related to human beings — the most precious and powerful resource when it comes to achieving sustainable development. The population issue should therefore be addressed on the basis of respect for the will of the people — in other words, on a voluntary basis.

In every country and region durable peace is a prerequisite for the implementation of the Programme of Action. Member States should refrain from any military action that would aggravate tensions and could lead to the outbreak of war. They should create a peaceful environment conducive to implementation of the Programme of Action.

The mobilization of sufficient financial resources at the national and international levels is also important for implementation of the Programme of Action. To this end, developed countries should meet the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product for overall official development assistance. They should also take the lead in creating a favourable international economic environment to enable developing countries to increase their domestic financial resources through sustained economic growth.

My delegation believes that South-South cooperation could be conducive to implementation of the Programme of Action. My delegation notes with appreciation the fact that the Cairo Programme of Action stresses the importance of South-South cooperation and of the new commitment to the provision of increased international financial resources for its development.

The success of the Cairo Conference also depends on there being an effective mechanism within the United Nations system to monitor the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels. Therefore, there must be timely designation of an appropriate organization to monitor and review implementation. To this end, my delegation looks forward to the UNFPA's being given an enhanced role.

In conclusion, I assure the Assembly that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains committed to implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action.

Mr. Abibi (Congo) *(interpretation from French)*: My delegation fully endorses the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 by the Permanent Representative of Algeria during the General Assembly's consideration of this agenda item, entitled "Report of the International Conference on Population and Development".

We should like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation of the conclusions — strategically important to all mankind — contained in the Programme of Action adopted in Cairo.

By introducing an innovative approach, emphasizing in particular the links between population and sustainable development, the Programme of Action presents the international community with a series of population and development measures that complement one another admirably and can help different countries to confront the demographic pressures that are foreseen. Its adoption by consensus clearly reflects the international community's growing awareness of the interdependence of population, development and environment, as well as its renewed commitment to confronting, in a spirit of solidarity, the various critical problems in these areas.

As everyone knows, these problems are numerous and are particularly acute for the developing countries, which is why we attach great importance to implementation of the measures set out in the Cairo Programme of Action. From this point of view, two factors seem to us to be decisive.

The first is unquestionably the political will of States to honour their commitments. Without that will, there is a danger that the capital accumulated throughout the process of preparing for the Conference and in Cairo — of which the Programme of Action is the admirable

outcome — will not be exploited. The mobilization of sufficient resources, both nationally and internationally, is one of the essential conditions for the Programme's implementation.

The second factor is linked to the essential role of the United Nations system in following up implementation of the Programme of Action and in the critical function of coordinating action to mobilize the necessary new and additional resources. Against this background, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is called upon to play a decisive role. It is not overstating the case to say that if the UNFPA is successfully to confront the complex tasks stemming from this new situation the time has come for the General Assembly to follow up on its resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993 by considering the possibility of giving UNFPA its own governing body.

In fact, the United Nations Population Fund must be able to benefit systematically and continuously from instructions from its own executive board, in carrying out new missions to follow up implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

The Republic of the Congo is determined to take the objectives of the Programme of Action into account in drawing up its own economic and social development plans. We reaffirm here our readiness to cooperate fully with the international community in implementing the Programme.

Finally, my delegation would like once again to say how deeply we appreciate the remarkable work of Mrs. Nafis Sadik as Secretary-General of the Conference throughout the preparatory process and during the actual conduct of the International Conference on Population and Development. We would like once again to express our gratitude to the Government of Egypt for the facilities it provided, which greatly contributed to the success of our meeting in Cairo.

Ms. Arystanbekova (Kazakhstan): The beginning of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly coincided with another outstanding event in the life of the international community — the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, which concluded its sessions, which, though often heated, were productive and constructive, just before we all gathered here in New York to put forward our collective vision and wisdom in addressing many global issues.

Since time has passed very quickly since the Cairo Conference, the report we have today before us (A/CONF.171/13), while taking us back to many interesting episodes of the pre-Cairo process and of the Conference itself, provides us with an opportunity to evaluate and reflect on what was achieved in Cairo in a somewhat more calm and responsible way in the United Nations General Assembly and, more importantly, to set in motion the process of the follow-up to the Cairo Conference and of the implementation of its Programme of Action.

At this juncture we must reconfirm that, without exaggeration, the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development was a significant breakthrough in our common vision of future global development. Through the spirit of goodwill, partnership and political will shown by all participants, the Conference — which brought together for a serious dialogue all major cultures and religions of the world, its basic schools of thought and ethics — was able to produce a global political consensus on many potentially divisive issues, which took the form of the forward-looking Programme of Action.

Reflecting as it does a serious move to make issues of population inseparable from overall issues of sustainable economic and social development and the environment, this voluminous document represents another major and far-reaching step forward on the basis of the results of the Conference in Mexico 10 years ago. The main outcome of the Cairo Programme of Action is that it makes the empowerment of women one of the core elements of sustainable development. We expect, therefore, that the Cairo Plan of Action, while containing specific goals and recommendations on such important population issues as infant and maternal mortality, education, reproductive health and family planning, will serve as a bridge between different aspects of global sustainable development, thus providing impetus to such development.

Issues raised in the context of the Cairo Plan of Action are of great importance for Kazakhstan, a new emerging democracy on the political map of the world. As with any other major United Nations forum, the Cairo Conference became for Kazakhstan a valuable source of learning about the trends of international relations in general and of sustainable development and population issues in particular.

Kazakhstan's Government fully understands that there cannot be one single universal way or approach to resolving population issues in different countries. It is clear that each country has its own priorities in this field as it faces its own unique set of problems and challenges which stem from historical political and economic development.

Kazakhstan is no exception. Without dwelling too long on the problems of population in Kazakhstan, I should like to say that the Republic, with its traditionally high birth rates among local populations and excessive population concentration in rural areas, has been carrying out relevant family planning policies with the emphasis on maternal and child health care. The situation in this area was and continues to be seriously aggravated by the major environmental degradation of vast regions around the shrinking Aral Sea, the former Semipalatinsk nuclear testing grounds and the Caspian Sea, as well as by severe industrial pollution in eastern and southern Kazakhstan.

The transition from a centrally planned to a market economy brought new and sometimes unfamiliar problems for Kazakhstan. Socio-economic instability, a sharp economic downturn and high inflation seriously affected the living standards of our population, especially its most unprotected groups. Under such circumstances, many families have chosen to have fewer children. Local studies of the death rate for the last six years also indicate the linkage between the rise in that index and social and economic setbacks. The other problems that emerged or were aggravated as a consequence of major political and economic developments in the former USSR, and which are matters of deep concern for Kazakhstan's Government, are high rates of migration of the population, increasing unemployment and serious difficulties in providing adequate social protection, health care and education because of the structural changes in these sectors previously run solely by the State, and the lack of adequate management of the process of their reform and adaptation.

The presence of unresolved old problems in the field of population related to the previous disproportionate economic development of Kazakhstan and the environmental degradation of large parts of the country, and new problems caused by economic transition combined with the lack of adequate resources, experience and expertise to tackle them, impede the overall process of economic reforms in Kazakhstan that are essential for its successful development.

Given the deteriorating demographic situation in Kazakhstan, our Government is fully aware of the need to elaborate and implement a comprehensive national policy in the field of population which will fully fit in the context of the new economic challenges faced by Kazakhstan, as well as of the efforts of the international community to ensure global sustainable development.

To make this possible, the technical and financial assistance of the international community is essential at the multilateral and the bilateral levels. Assistance in carrying out our national family-planning programmes would be particularly helpful if it focused on setting up regional family-planning centres, training administrative and medical personnel, improving the system of maternal and child health care, introducing modern methods of demographic data-collection and analysis, developing new skills of demographers, and so on.

In the light of all this, my delegation welcomes the universal nature of the Cairo Programme of Action, which represents the collective commitment of all countries in the field of population and development. Of course, there are some outstanding issues to be resolved. Nobody doubts that the availability of sufficient financial resources and adequate institutional improvements and adjustments are essential to making the consistent, coherent and well-coordinated implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action possible. The Programme of Action's complementarity at the national, subregional, regional and international levels is also crucial.

In the final analysis, it is not the adoption of the Cairo Programme of Action that matters but our collective ability to live up to the mutual commitments set forth in the Programme and to translate the political consensus of the Cairo Conference into a consensus of action throughout the entire process of the follow-up to it. The Republic of Kazakhstan supports the Programme of Action of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development and is committed to making it a reality.

Mr. Dubček (Slovakia): We are living at a time when it takes a tremendous effort to discover some new way to bring about partnership and coexistence on the local, national, regional and global levels. There currently exists a variety of proposals on the best way to reach those goals. During the past few years, several far-reaching events have occurred that have become milestones in the sphere of international activities. One such event took place recently in Cairo: the International

Conference on Population and Development, which came to a successful conclusion this past September.

Our delegation would like to express its thanks to the secretariat of the International Conference on Population and Development, headed by Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the Conference and Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund. Let me also thank Egypt for its excellent arrangements and warm hospitality.

On 13 September 1994 the Conference approved its Programme of Action, thereby demonstrating that the world community can address the challenges posed by population and development and that it can represent an effective balance of views. Our governmental delegation in Cairo was composed of a broad spectrum of representatives from various governmental and non-governmental organizations. Our delegation found the discussions that took place in both formal and informal meetings to be a tremendously enriching experience.

The implementation of the Programme of Action requires effective follow-up actions. We believe that the Economic and Social Council should play a useful role in the follow-up to Cairo. In accordance with paragraph 16.8 of the Programme of Action, our experts will prepare a national programme of action that will focus directly on our particular priorities, thereby disseminating the Programme of Action. The Programme of Action is a prelude to the 1995 World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. Slovakia supports the premise that the advancement of the role of women in society is a crucial tool in bringing about concrete change.

Slovakia, as a Central European country with an economy in transition, welcomes the proposed activities at the national and the international levels. Cooperation with the Economic Commission for Europe and other United Nations agencies and organizations will speed our efforts to solve problems related to population and development. Both governmental and non-governmental organizations will seek the support needed to implement the goals, objectives and actions of this Programme.

The Programme of Action has set out the objectives and the required actions for the beginning of the next century. As a result, we have been led to a fundamental re-examination of the goals and strategies of national and international population programmes and of the very language we use to talk about these programmes. This, in turn, will certainly bring about progress in the many fields related to population and development. Rapid population growth, unchanged patterns of consumption and a lack of environmental technologies continue to be major obstacles to social and economic development. The contrast between the rich and the poor is becoming greater and greater, both within and between States. We are facing growing imbalances between population growth and resource-use that pose a threat, while at the same time large portions of the world's population are being excluded from economic and social development.

The Cairo Conference clearly fulfilled its mission. It paved the way for the world community to bring about further economic growth and development, gender equality, the equality and empowerment of women, a reduction of poverty, the creation of jobs and the promotion of social integration. The broad consensus among Governments, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations regarding population and development is of the utmost importance to the entire population.

Mr. Cissé (Senegal) (*interpretation from French*): The splendid job done by Mrs. Nafis Sadik and her team, in close cooperation with the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations, was one of the key factors in the success of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo from 5 to 13 September. We should add that the warm welcome and customary hospitality accorded all the participants in the Conference by His Excellency Mr. Hosni Mubarak and the Government and people of Egypt greatly facilitated the historic consensus achieved in Cairo.

This consensus was unquestionably the result of the international community's unprecedented recognition of the need for the United Nation to consider expressly, in an integrated manner, all demographic questions in their relationship to the maintenance of economic growth, sustainable development, the eradication of poverty, gender equality and reproductive health. This commitment was also the result of the international community's nearly unanimous acknowledgment of the central role to be played by the individual in the development process.

The delegation of Senegal fully endorses the statement made by my colleague from Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Therefore, I will confine myself to highlighting a few points of particular

importance to my delegation, *inter alia* the implementation and follow-up of the results of the International Conference on Population and Development, at the national, subregional, regional and international levels.

It was Senegal's privilege to be one of the Vice-Chairmen both of the Preparatory Committee and the Conference itself. The interest shown by my country in these matters is even greater now as we enter the implementation stage of the Programme of Action.

For this reason, immediately after the Cairo Conference, our country set up a small group to consider further the national machinery needed to implement and follow up the Programme of Action. This group was open to non-governmental organizations and will study ways and means to submit periodic reports on the implementation of the results achieved in Cairo at the national level. It will also study changes to our demographic programme in the light of the Cairo Programme of Action.

At the regional level, I should like to recall that Senegal hosted the African Conference on Population which helped us to establish a common position which was cemented by the adoption of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, the Family and Sustainable Development.

Africa's commitment to dealing with the major problems of population and development and the links between the two can be seen through the creation, within the Organization of African Unity, of an African Population Commission. It is clear that an appropriate regional follow-up machinery requires the constant support of the international community for Africa, a continent which is facing the most serious population and development problems.

In this connection, I should like to stress the need for further resources to help African countries to satisfy their fundamental needs in terms of national demographic programmes. Furthermore, the Economic Commission for Africa, United Nations regional bodies and other competent regional and subregional bodies should bring their demographic activities into line with the need to take fully into account an integrated approach to population and development problems as specified in the Programme of Action.

With regard to the follow-up by the United Nations system, my delegation would like to recall that in resolution 48/162, the General Assembly called for the creation of a separate executive board for the United Nations Population Fund, and for its establishment to be considered after the International Conference on Population and Development. My country is following closely all developments in this connection because the volume of work of the United Nations Population Fund will increase considerably with the implementation of the Programme of Action incorporates development and population questions.

However, if this issue is not settled at the present session, my delegation believes that it could be referred to the Economic and Social Council. In order to facilitate an effective follow-up to the Programme of Action and ensure that we are on course half-way through the Programme in 1999, a final decision on this question should be taken, at the latest, by the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, which will reconsider the governing bodies of United Nations development programmes and funds in accordance with resolution 48/162.

Specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies should periodically report on changes in their activities, programmes and mid-term strategies so that they can be incorporated in the follow-up to the Conference.

In the same way, the Population Commission, which will play a central role in monitoring the implementation of the Programme of Action at the intergovernmental level, should be restructured in terms both of its mandate and of its composition. Its programme of work should be updated and rationalized so that it can carry out the tasks assigned to it in effectively carrying out the goals set out at the Conference.

In conclusion, the delegation of Senegal believes that the United Nations will not be able efficiently to reach the goals of the Cairo Programme of Action in the next two decades unless the world Organization streamlines, harmonizes and works towards greater coordination of its activities in the areas of population and development.

To that we might add that if the necessary resources are not allocated, the legitimate hopes raised by the Programme of Action will soon be dashed and the Cairo Conference may end up as nothing more than just another conference to go down in the annals of the history of international relations. This is something we must avoid.

Mr. Larrain (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The recent International Conference on Population and

Development held in Cairo from 5 to 13 September highlighted the importance of this question at the present time. Similarly, it made it clear that the United Nations is able to face the challenges brought about up by the new realities.

We should like to congratulate and express our gratitude to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mrs. Nafis Sadik, and her team, for the splendid job done both during the preparatory process and during the meetings of the Conference. We believe that the successful results obtained are due largely to the efforts that were made during the preparatory process. In the specific case of Latin America, various prior meetings facilitated the preparation of countries and made possible regional consensuses on a range of complex and delicate issues dealt with by this Conference.

The Conference highlighted the need to promote the importance of cultural coexistence in the work of the United Nations and also to make compatible various values and basic principles of different cultures.

At the national level, we believe that the impetus was given to the plans and programmes of various ministries involved in population and development matters. At the same time, we are making progress towards sustainable development. In this endeavour, policies must take account of the adequacy of resources needed for population matters, as well as the level, growth and distribution of such resources.

Massive participation by society, the work in all negotiations, is one example of the cooperation which must serve as a basis for promoting the role of non-governmental organizations in multilateral activities. Their role in implementing the programmes must be assumed with the same enthusiasm as has already been shown, in order to ensure the continuity of their contribution.

We believe that Cairo initiated a new stage in the United Nations system's handling of population problems. Implementing the agreements incorporated in the Programme of Action necessitates a study of how to enable the institutional machinery to cope with the new requirements. We must be prepared to consider initiatives along these lines.

We would like to highlight the fact that all participants made a major effort to harmonize different positions in the common interest. We think highly of the texts that were agreed, for they embody and integrate the different points of view of the international community on such sensitive subjects as family planning, the rights and health of women and the financing of the planned activities, to mention only a few of the subjects that posed the greatest difficulty.

The President: In accordance with the decision taken yesterday, I now call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Martino (Holy See): The delegation of the Holy See has taken note of the report of the International Conference on Population and Development. I am pleased to have this opportunity to address the General Assembly on this item and to comment on the Programme of Action.

It is well known that Catholic organizations are involved in a wide array of development activities as well as humanitarian assistance programmes throughout the world. These undertakings focus on education and basic health care, always considering their primary component, the human being and his or her integral development. Therefore, the Holy See is keenly interested in the issues which were addressed at the Conference.

Consistent with its own moral convictions and teachings, the Holy See ultimately associated itself, through a partial consensus, with selected chapters of the report, and supported specific sections in the document.

The Holy See notes that the International Conference on Population and Development affirmed the application of universally recognized human rights standards to all aspects of population programmes. While fundamental human rights represent a common good for all humanity on its path towards peace, it is necessary in this context to note clearly that when one speaks of rights one is actually concomitantly defining duties. The international community is given not only the priority, but also the duty, to promote and protect all human rights in a just and balanced manner. However, as the Programme of Action clearly states,

> "the International Conference on Population and Development does not create any new international human rights". *(A/CONF.171/13, para. 1.15)*

The majority of the principles set forth in the document make a substantial contribution to understanding the entire Programme of Action. The chapter on principles expresses, with greater specificity

and clarity than any other chapter, the basic inspiration which guided the work of the Conference and must continue to guide its implementation. My delegation is pleased to find in the introductory paragraph of chapter II, and thus as a concept implied throughout the document, that the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Programme of Action shall be done in each State

> "with full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of its people, and in conformity with universally recognized international human rights." *(A/CONF.171/13, p.14)*

These points, as well as non-coercion, are central in the implementation of population-related policies.

The first four principles all address aspects of the human being, and this is done prior to referring to the role of the State. My delegation is pleased to see that the concept of the importance of the human being and its prioritization in all issues related to sustainable development, already enshrined in the Rio Declaration, is carried forward in the Programme of Action.

The Holy See delegation welcomes the Conference's linkage of population and development as an important focus of consideration, emphasizing the right to development in the principles when it states:

> "The right to development is a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights, and the human person is the central subject of development." *(ibid., p. 14)*

The Conference notes that population policies must be considered within the context of overall development. However, the Holy See had hoped for a more comprehensive treatment of the relationship between population and development, with appropriate attention being given to specific development strategies in which the developed nations would manifest a stronger commitment and establish some priorities. This would have addressed issues such as the transfer of technology and the results of progress in medicine, alleviation of external debt and development of new markets for developing nations.

The Holy See wishes to stress its support for that portion of the document which provides for strengthening the family. Indeed, the family is the basic unit of society and, as such, is entitled to comprehensive protection and support by Governments. The family belongs to the sacred heritage of humanity and to the future of the human race. But the family is based on marriage — a permanent, faithful, mutual relationship — between a man and a woman. It involves partnership and mutual respect and is committed to the bearing and rearing of children and the guidance of adolescents. However, the Programme of Action, in many instances, does not adequately take into consideration the concrete application of the rights and responsibilities of parents in the context of the family, and particularly their important continuing responsibilities as regards the guidance of adolescents. It is hoped that in the implementation of the Programme of Action the responsibility of States to respect parental rights and duties will be closely adhered to.

The Conference properly recognized that women must be full and equal participants in development. This means that women must also enjoy equal opportunity in education, primary health care, professional career choices and employment opportunities in order for them to meet their basic human needs and to exercise their human rights. It is hoped that a more objective treatment of women's true roles and responsibilities will be taken up in Beijing in 1995.

An important issue in the Programme of Action is that of reproductive health care. Expressing concern over the high rates of morbidity and mortality in many countries, the Programme of Action appropriately makes reduction of child and maternal mortality one of its primary objectives. My delegation continues to be concerned about the health of each and every human being, including his or her reproductive health. The Holy See's great concern about the unacceptable incidence of maternal death in various parts of the world is evidenced by its commitment to maintaining a vast network of health-care facilities and programmes run by Catholic organizations throughout the world. At the same time, however, the Holy See cannot, does not and will not accept abortion as a component of reproductive health care.

Throughout the Conference process, the Holy See made clear its grave concern regarding the treatment of the issue of abortion in the Programme of Action. The Holy See spoke strongly in favour of the value of every human life, including the life of the unborn child. The deliberate destruction of the unborn is inconsistent with respect for human life and puts in jeopardy all other human rights, of which the right to life is the very cornerstone. Any compromise of this most fundamental of all human rights is particularly dangerous as part of a

social or demographic policy promoted by States, whose duty it is to protect life.

Although the Cairo Programme of Action has reconfirmed that abortion is not to be promoted as a method of family planning, it dangerously hints at condoning the legalization and provision of abortion services within the context of population-related policies. My delegation would like to see more concerted efforts emerge to make concrete those sections of the Programme of Action which urge that

> "Governments should take appropriate steps to help women avoid abortion". *(A/CONF.171/13, annex, para. 7.24)*

No new internationally recognized right to abortion can be implied by the document since the preamble, as noted earlier, states that the International Conference on Population and Development does not create any new international human rights.

The Holy See recognizes that sexuality is an important aspect of personal identity. It is not difficult to understand that sexuality finds its proper and deepest expression within a context of reciprocity. The Programme of Action, however, invokes a policy on sexuality that does not give due consideration to that dimension of reciprocity which is the expression of mutual love and decision-making within a stable, conjugal relationship but that, instead, presents an individualistic and permissive approach to sexual behaviour, even for adolescents, which undermines an appropriate understanding of human dignity and the moral responsibility of each person. A permissive attitude towards sexual behaviour undermines the family, parenthood and the well-being of the child and has a highly destabilizing effect on society as a whole.

While attention was often given to the rights of women and men, there was a notable absence of concern about the rights of children, except in the "Principles". My delegation firmly believes that every child, from the moment of conception, is a person in his or her own right, and thus deserves legal protection and support. At Cairo the Holy See reminded the international community that at the moment in which new human life is created there are no longer only two participants — man and woman — but a third, the child. That is why the expression "safe abortion" is ambiguous. Abortion is never safe for one of the persons involved. The child, already conceived, dies. Sadly, since children are the weakest and most vulnerable members of our society, they are easily exploited, marginalized, and even eliminated. If we are truly concerned about our future, then we must invest in our children.

Concerning the movement of peoples, the Holy See supported the chapters on international and internal migration, but would have preferred a consensus on a more firm commitment to the reunification of families.

The Holy See was pleased to take part in the International Conference on Population and Development, to express its position and to make efforts to forge a consensus with other nations. Some areas of disagreement remain, not only for the Holy See but for a substantial number of States whose large number of reservations to the document before us are a matter of record. The Holy See, while offering partial consensus, enumerated its difficulties with various wordings in the Programme of Action in its final statement at the Conference and in the Holy See's reservations to this document.

The Holy see hopes that all parties charged with the responsibility for the implementation of the Programme of Action will keep at the forefront of their endeavours respect for the dignity of all persons. Backed by such inspiration, one can be confident in the achievement of full solidarity for the integral development of all human beings.

The President: We have heard the last speaker on this item.

In accordance with the decision taken by the Assembly at its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1994, action on this item will be taken in the Second Committee.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 158.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.